

T H E

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THE DIGNITY OF THE TEACHER'S PROFESSION.

MUCH has been said and written of the dignity of the teacher's profession. Again, and yet again, has it been said that his profession is as dignified and honorable as *any* of the so called learned professions; and many an earnest lecturer and essayist has set forth the claims of the teacher to the high consideration of the community for whose benefit he toils; — accompanied but too frequently with whining and croaking about the neglect, the low estimation of others which he is continually obliged to encounter, and the supercilious airs, the oppression, &c. of school committees and trustees.

Now, while it is all-important that the mission of the teacher should be duly appreciated; while such appreciation of his worth is absolutely essential to his highest usefulness, it should never be forgotten that the tendency and almost inevitable result of such complaining and fretting, on the part of teachers, and such charges of injustice and oppression, is not to elevate the dignity of the teacher's profession, to render it more honorable in the eyes of the community, but to give the profession a lower place in their estimation.

The question then becomes an important one to every teacher, — What can I do to promote the proper dignity of the profession, and to secure for it the highest respect of the community? For we apprehend that the consideration in which the profession shall be held in the future, will depend more upon the character of those who fill its ranks than upon all other influences together. What, then, are the best means which teachers can use to promote the dignity of their profession?

1. *Teachers should not rest satisfied with present attainments.*

Every teacher has ordinarily some hours of every day at his own disposal. Some portion of this time should be devoted to study. In addition to a familiar acquaintance with the particular branches which he is required to teach, he should pursue other branches of study; and in order to make the best progress, he should have some particular study to which a portion of every day shall be devoted. He will now give his study hours to algebra, or geometry;—anon, he will be pursuing a course of reading in natural philosophy, chemistry, or history;—at one time he will be engaged in the study of the Latin, or the Greek, or one of the modern European languages; at another, geology, botany, or some kindred subject will claim his attention. This term he is preparing a lecture, or series of lectures, on the resources of Great Britain, and her various dependencies; the next, on the prevailing currents of the ocean and the atmosphere; during another, the history, processes, and present perfection of some mechanic art;—and so on to the end of the chapter, if perchance one who commences such a course should ever find the end. To such a one a scrap-book will be of great value, in which would be registered, under appropriate heads, facts as they appear in the current literature of the day, new discoveries in the natural sciences, improvements in the arts, statistics, and the thousand items which come under his notice in his promiscuous daily reading, most of which could otherwise never be recalled.

What an amount of valuable knowledge may one acquire in the course of twenty, or even ten years, by such a course of study. How much better qualified to train the youth of our land to their high destiny is he who has made these attainments, and how much more certain to command the respect of society, than the teacher of whom it is said, “he knows nothing beyond what he is required to teach.” If all our teachers will for ten years to come pursue the course here recommended, we shall no longer hear the complaint so often made, that the profession of teaching is not regarded as honorable. It is not only the privilege, but the duty, a duty which teachers, especially those who have more recently entered service, owe to society, to their profession, to themselves, so to improve the talents committed to them, and the opportunities for mental cultivation which they enjoy, that the profession cannot but command and receive, the highest respect of an enlightened and grateful community.

2. *Teachers should be content with the honors of the teacher, the faithful, efficient, talented teacher, and not pant for honors from which their peculiar occupation excludes them.* The teacher cannot expect, and he should not desire the honors that attach to the statesman, the senator, or representative, in either the state or national councils, or even to the occupants of the humbler muni-

cial offices of town or city. The teacher who looks *upward* toward such honors, certainly occupies a very low place in his own estimation, and it would not be a wonder if he should, in the estimation of society. The honors which belong to the faithful, whole-hearted teacher, he should esteem of greater worth than all those other honors put together. And are they not? Shall the thing made claim higher honors than its maker? Where had been all our honorable men, had they not known in their youth the forming hand of the teacher.

3. *Teachers should pursue a straight forward, independent, ingenuous course in all things; seeking rather to do their duty as teachers, than to gain the applause of men.*

The approbation of one's own conscience is of more value than the applause of the whole world beside. While the consistent teacher will desire to gain the approbation of others, if he may do it by doing his duty, he will not seek such approbation by any of the tricks and low arts which are sometimes resorted to, for the practice of which he must forfeit the respect both of himself and of the wise and discerning among whom he labors.

4. *Teachers should not regard school committees and trustees with distrust, nor indulge a fretful, complaining spirit towards them.* School committees are but men; are liable to err as other men; are, to say the least, as disinterested, as willing to perform services for which they receive no pecuniary compensation, nor even the gratitude of those for whom they labor, as other men; and it may be added, are as willing to be informed of their errors, and to correct them, as other men. If, perchance, a committee man, or a board of school committee men, have in the opinion of a teacher acted injudiciously, it is not only the teacher's privilege, but his duty to make known to them his opinion, respectfully, yet candidly and without reserve. By such a course he will not only secure the respect of committee men, but not improbably have his own views modified by comparing them with the views of those who look upon the matter from a different point of view, as well as be the means of modifying theirs. The teacher should ever remember that his situation, and that of school committee men are so different, their points of observation are so unlike, that there is frequently room for a wide, yet honest difference of opinion between them.

5. It hardly need be added that the teacher should consecrate to the profession his best powers; that the controlling motive of his soul should be a desire to promote the best interests of the young, both for this life and the next. That in all his efforts for the mental and moral culture of his own nature, his aim should be to render himself in the highest degree useful to

his fellow-beings in the important station he is called to occupy. That his ambitions should have less than most men's of aught that is selfish, or low, or grovelling in them. The glory of God in the moral and intellectual cultivation of the rising generation should be "his being's end and aim."

We rejoice to know that there are many, nay very many teachers who do to some good extent thus honor their profession, themselves, and their Maker. Such teachers will not only be honored by God, whose honor they seek, but also by men, whose honor is not the supreme object of their desire.

STYLE.

FEW things are more important in the education of youth, of this age and country, than the acquisition of a good style of composition. The world now is more influenced by the written, than the spoken word. The *pen* makes the speeches, transacts the business, moulds the governments, and it is to be hoped, will soon fight the battles of the world. In our own country, the want of a fixed, pure, appropriate style of composition, is a very great want. So many elements are entering continually into the formation of our national character, mind, and literature, that there is a danger that something corrupt, and anomalous, will spring up among us, in the place of the pure, simple English of our ancestors. Already there is a tendency towards too great intensity of expression, false sublimity, and a want of simplicity of every kind.

Much may be done even before the youth enters College, to lead him to adopt a pure, simple, effective, and manly style. Close criticism on the part of the Instructor, is beyond all things important. The instant checking of any tendency to extravagant expression, after a due allowance made for the more ardent feeling of youth; the stern repression of all vulgarisms, cant phrases, and unnecessary Americanisms; the continual enforcing of the idea of the importance of precision of language; and a cautious bestowal of commendation, which too largely dispensed, might destroy forever the power of modest and simple writing; these are rules of criticism which commend themselves to all. Another means of inducing a good style of composition to youthful scholars, is an attention paid to their manner of conversation. Without employing a pedagogical or annoying method of doing this, no ungrammatical or inelegant expression should be suffered to pass uncorrected, and oftentimes a little

salt of ridicule rubbed into the reproof, without doing harm, will make it remembered.

The study of grammar rightly conducted, in a fresh, natural, and philosophical manner, is another great help to the formation of a good style. He who is not thoroughly founded on a good knowledge of English grammar, will always be a careless, and never become a free, and self-dependent writer. The niceties and proprieties of a language whose syntax is so difficult as that of the English, can never be mastered excepting by a faithful study of English grammar, aided by the knowledge or illustrations of the original languages. Neither should the dictionary be neglected in this connection; a simple study of the best English dictionary, has been confessedly the foundation of many a distinguished author's vigor and richness of style.

A pointing of the youthful mind to the best literature, to the reading of pure and classic English authors, is still another most important method of forming a good style. Dissuading from Carlyle, and from most of the modern romance literature, let an instructor place such authors as Walter Scott, Washington Irving, and Goldsmith, into the hands of the young; nor need the instructor be afraid of recommending Shakspeare to a bright boy. The mighty bard will soon enclose him in his mesh, as he does the old and the profound. Above all, let our English Bible be set before the young mind as the great model of composition, as well as the great guide to truth.

A good style has been called "proper words in proper places." It may be said to be chiefly characterized by the two qualities of Purity and Force. A pure style consists in the using of true English words, and no others. The words which the usage of good writers and of educated men justifies, there form the only allowable treasury of a pure writer. He is not permitted to introduce his Latin, German, and French learning, his business idioms, his camp, scientific, or political technicalities, or his religious conventionalisms, into his written language. *This* rises above the momentary necessity, and enters into more of permanence, observation, and dignity. He who would coin a new word must create the occasion for it; and he who alters words now in use, must hold himself ready to answer for such assaults on the wisdom and good taste of our ancestors. A pure writer may introduce common and strong phrases, but he never descends to low and vulgar ones. He does not "admire to do a thing" when he would much better "be pleased to do it;" neither does he make a thing "lengthy" when he could make it "long;" nor does he "fellowship with a man" when he can just as well "be his companion;" nor does he "calculate" that a thing will happen, when in fact he only "expects" that it will.

Americanisms are sometimes necessary, when productions and ideas strictly of American origin, are to be spoken of. The greatest purist would find no fault with our city "lots," where, as with us, cities are drawn on paper, before they are builded on the ground.

Purity of style also comprehends the idea of simplicity of every kind,—the avoiding of unusual and abstruse terms, freedom from labored ornament, and a perfect *appropriateness* of expression to the subject of the composition. For one who is writing on the abating of a city nuisance, to assume the style of an author discussing the philosophy of the Phædo, would be absurd; yet we see and hear this absurdity in written and spoken style every day. Our Western, and sometimes our Eastern eloquence marches on with a thundering Johnsonian stride, that seems to shake the ground, when a light and easy step that hardly brushes the dew from the grass, is often all that is necessary. Such eloquence soon exhausts itself, and when a theme really grand and stirring comes to be discussed, no power and no terms are left. Nearly all great writers and orators have had a simple style. Demosthenes spoke like a "business man to business men." Luther's words were as direct, natural, and unaffected, as a child's. Pitt made great and involved political questions clear as noonday, by the noble simplicity of his expressed opinions. This was Peel's peculiar power, and the secret of his vast influence as a parliamentary orator. This is especially the characteristic of our own Webster's style of speaking and writing. The commonest man would have no difficulty in understanding all that Webster has uttered or composed. Under purity of style may be reckoned all the quality of Precision. By precision, I mean that quality by which the thought is expressed exactly, with no lack or surplus. This is a healthy beauty in a writer, denoting clearness of head and definiteness of thought. Perhaps no writer could be named as a better exponent of this quality than Junius, whose sentences never suffer their vigorous blow to be deadened, by any obliqueness or circuitousness in its descent. Want of precision in style, usually betokens want of precision in thought, and a vast deal of nonsense and false sublimity have been hid under the veil of an obscure style. Accurate knowledge of words, of the use of relative terms, and of the niceties of syntax, are indispensable to precision of style, which however, as we use it, is not a *precise* style, allowing no freedom and easy play of thought and expression. One may be a highly imaginative and discursive writer, and yet have sufficient precision of language always to make his thoughts clear to the eye of the reader. The subject and the thought may even be profound and abstruse, but that is the very reason why they should be carefully and clearly expressed. It is not

necessary to be vague if one philosophizes, nor to mingle heaven and earth in language, in order that it may be called poetry. Shakspeare, though sometimes, in his imperial license, he bursts through this rule of precision, is more frequently remarkable for his singular and forcible precision in the use of words, as for instance in that compact sentence from Macbeth —

“To say with doubt, or shake with fear.”

No one but he who had a profound appreciation of the exact force of every Saxon English word, could have written such a sentence as that, so brief and yet so powerful. Men's minds must have balances in them to weigh words, as one weighs gold coin, before they can avoid violating entirely this rule of precision of style. And above all, thus to write, so that nobody can misunderstand, one must first think so that he cannot misunderstand himself.

The second quality of a good style which I have mentioned is force. Without this characteristic, a style may have all other qualities in vain. Without the *gun carries to the mark*, all its beauty and ornament of workmanship are of little value. A forceful, effective style is the result chiefly of strong, clear, and vivid thought. This, formed with sincerity, and earnest feeling, and also with skill in the use of language, makes a style of speech and writing that *tells*. A man who is not in sober earnest in what he writes, is apt to write circuitously, enigmatically, or triflingly. Faith and zeal are noble elements of strength in style. Skill too in the construction of sentences, making them compact, and well defined, promotes strength. No straggling, indefinite sentences, of which the reader may ask, why is this sentence just here? or, why is it in this article at all? Such sentences should be avoided. All the previous qualities of style which we have mentioned, if carefully attended to, go to promote force of style. Yet it is not, after all, by a critical, formal attention to such rules of writing, that a good and strong style is acquired. It is more by the habits of thought, the general discipline of the mind, the character of the reading, and the character of the conversation, society, and pursuits. Style is a general effect of all these causes, a resultant of these several lines. A man who has been an earnest student, who has a definite aim in view, whose heart has fire in it, whose head has thought in it, who has a natural intellectual appetency for manly reading and the society of educated and disciplined minds, will be likely to write and speak in a vigorous, clear, and forceful manner. The great faults of the mass of American writers of the present day are, we think, want of studious thought, want of condensed thought, want of simplicity of thought, and a too great striving after fine, intense,

and sublime language. When the thought is really grand, and sublime, the language becomes the mere vehicle, and unconsciously simplifies itself. This idea of grandeur of style, has yet to be generally appreciated by American writers, and it is in fact the offspring of the highest cultivation, which brings back invariably to nature, for the highest art is the truest nature. It remains for instructors of American youth to be the real reformers in this most important matter. They may plant the germs of a better style of writing and speaking among the rising generation, so that something truly noble and great in literature, and in eloquence, may be the fruits, in our own times and country.

J. M. H.

Salem, August 15.

ARITHMETIC.

WITHOUT intending to write an essay on teaching arithmetic, we propose to offer a few thoughts which some experience in teaching has suggested. We introduce what we have to say by a few extracts from that excellent book, "The Teacher's Manual," by Thomas H. Palmer, A. M., first published in 1840.

"The same pernicious error which was noticed in speaking of the mode of teaching reading and writing, prevails in this science, viz. a neglect of the foundation; a hurrying of the initiatory steps. Without clear, distinct notions of numeration, no satisfactory progress can ever be made in arithmetic; and yet there are schools, where it is not taught at all; where the pupil commences with addition, and is left to acquire a knowledge of the local value of figures as best he may. And even in those schools where it is taught, the subject is passed over too rapidly; valuable deductions that might be drawn from it being entirely omitted."

"The four fundamental processes, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, are by no means sufficiently practised."

"The subject of decimal fractions is treated of separately from that of whole numbers, in all our treatises on arithmetic, or in an advanced section of the book. This arrangement is highly exceptionable, and is, probably, the reason why so many complain of the difficulty of understanding decimals, when in fact the subject is so exceedingly simple. Their extreme simplicity confuses them, as from their position in the work they are led to imagine there must be something behind which they do not see; something beneath the surface, which their efforts fail to bring to light; a notion that confuses and mystifies the whole subject. Let us see whether any difficulty could possi-

bly arise, if decimals were taught in connection with whole numbers."

"And, first, let us suppose that notation of whole numbers had been explained to the pupil, so that he understood that figures increased tenfold in value by being moved one place to the left, and decreased tenfold by being moved to the right; and that they were named accordingly."

"What difficulty could any child have, in understanding that, when we had to place figures still further to the right, it became necessary to use a dot, (.) to show the place of units, which no longer occupied the right-hand place; and that the same names were used for the numbers ten times, &c. *less* than units, as for those tenfold, &c. *greater*, only that we *added th* to them; the one to the left of units being called a *tens*, and that to the right *tenths*, the second to the left, hundreds, the second to the right, hundredths."

The author of the above work believes that this whole matter of the notation of decimals, both fractional and integral, "would be perfectly intelligible to a class of children about six years, if shown on the blackboard." . . . "The repetition of this lesson on the blackboard for three or four days in succession would fix the fact thoroughly in the mind of the class, that *whole numbers and decimal fractions were named on the same principle*; both, in fact, being *decimals*, or numbers reckoned *by tens*."

We forbear quoting more from the above work, as it is in the hands of so many teachers. Those who do not already possess it, should purchase it without delay. It is a work of 160 pages, and is sold "*for just cost price*."

The almost universal ignorance of the decimal notation of which the author complains in the above extracts, is the more to be lamented in our own country, from the fact that our currency is a *decimal* currency, and that operations in it can be safely trusted to those only who are familiar with the principles of the decimal notation, fractional as well as integral. The specific rules for performing operations in dollars, cents, and mills, which are given to the learner in most text-books in arithmetic, being arbitrary, and based upon no general principle already explained and understood, are very uncertain in their application; for the reason, if for no other, that arbitrary rules are easily forgotten.

The mode of presenting decimals to the learner along with integers, at the very commencement of his course in written arithmetic, may require more patient labor at first, but this will be amply repaid by his subsequent progress.

Another important means of securing rapid future progress to the pupil, is *rapidity of execution*. This can only be acquired by

long practice upon the fundamental rules. The pupil should, *even in his early exercises in mental arithmetic*, be taught to add columns of figures; and before taking the common school arithmetics, should have been thoroughly drilled in the four fundamental rules, viz. addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

ADDITION. The teacher should write upon the blackboard a column of 1's, and require the pupil or class to add them as he points to them in succession, both upwards and downwards. This exercise is simply *counting* numbers. Let this be practised until the little fellows keep exact time with the motions of the teacher's pointer. Then a column of 2's should be written and added in the same manner; then one of 2's and 1's alternately; then one of 3's; then a column of 3's and 1's; another of 3's and 2's; another of 3's, 2's, and 1's, or of 2's, 1's, and 3's; — not introducing other figures, or *new combinations of those already used*, till the child can add the previous ones with the rapidity of thought, and keep time with the teacher's pointer.

Again, in adding a column of figures, as the following, for example, 4, 5, 7, 3, 2, 6, 1, he should not be taught or allowed to say "4 and 5 are 9, and 7 are 16, and 3 are 19, &c.," but he should be taught to say, "4, 9, 16, 19, 21, 27, 28," and do it as rapidly as he can articulate the words.

In the other fundamental operations, the same rapidity of execution should be aimed at, and the pupil should be drilled in them till it is acquired. Not only will such drilling render his subsequent progress rapid and easy, but the habit of promptness and close attention thus acquired will not be confined to exercises in arithmetic, but will be more or less prominent in every thing he undertakes.

It is an excellent practice, as the pupils progress in the study of arithmetic, besides requiring them to show their work upon the slate, and to explain every step in the process, to dictate to them at every recitation an example similar to one in the lesson just learned, for them to perform on the spot. As soon as any one has solved the problem, he will pass his slate to the teacher, who by a glance of the eye will see if the work is right, and when all have done it who can do it promptly, the slates may be returned, and another example given. Each scholar will, of course, be informed whether his work is correct or not, and incorrect, be required to correct it afterwards. This mode of examination will furnish a very important test of the pupil's knowledge of the lesson, and encourage the rapidity and correctness of execution so indispensable in an expert accountant.

Frequent reviews in arithmetic, as in every other branch of study, are of the highest importance. The teacher should *know* that the class is so familiar with every principle already learned that he can apply it correctly, and not be satisfied with knowing that he was once familiar with it.

With this end in view, viz. *perfect familiarity with principles and with their application*, the teacher will not confine himself to the exercises prepared by the author of the text-book, but will extend them till the end is attained; for no author can anticipate the precise amount of exercise each pupil will need upon any one principle before he is prepared to advance to another.

As one means of securing facility of execution, the pupil should be required, as far as practicable, to prove his work to be correct. For example, all operations in division should be proved by multiplication; those in reduction ascending, by reduction descending; and the reverse, when the pupil has progressed far enough to be able to do it. Operations in proportion should be proved by analysis, &c.

Let it not be said that the methods here recommended will render the pupil's progress slow and tedious; for so far from this being the result, he will, by such methods alone, acquire that facility and correctness which are essential to rapid and satisfactory progress in future.

The teacher should ever bear in mind, that all the topics treated of in arithmetic are not of equal importance to every pupil, and that he should adapt his instructions in this study, as in every other, to the peculiar wants of the pupil. The scholar whose opportunities for learning arithmetic are very limited, should be exercised very thoroughly in the elementary rules, and in their application to as great a variety as possible of common business transactions. He should be encouraged "to make up questions" for himself, and solve them; and every means should be used to render the knowledge he may acquire most useful to him when his short term of pupilage shall have expired. The pupil who is intended for the counting-room should be carefully drilled in percentage, equations, accounts current, &c.; the future mechanic should be as thoroughly drilled in the square and cube root, and their application to a great variety of practical examples, and in mensuration and the mechanic powers.

May we be indulged in a single remark in reference to recitations conducted by question and answer? It is this. Every answer of the pupil should contain a distinct and entire proposition. A few examples will illustrate our meaning. *Teacher*. "How many are 8 times 78?" *Pupil*. "Eight times 78 are 624;" and not "624" alone. *Teacher*. "What is the rule for reducing compound fractions to simple ones?" *Pupil*. "To reduce compound numbers to simple ones, reduce all the numbers to a fractional form; and after cancelling," &c. This method of answering questions has the sanction of antiquity, as well as of common sense. Thus the catechism of the Westminster Assembly. *Quest*. "What is the chief end of man?" *Ans*. "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever."

THE SCHOOL CASE.

WE find the following remarks in the Lynn News, and, at the request of many of our subscribers, copy them, under the conviction that they will possess interest for all the readers of the Teacher. A few explanatory remarks may be necessary.

Mr. King, who is well known as an active friend to all educational movements in our State, is, and has been for many years, the highly successful principal of one of the Grammar Schools in the city of Lynn. A few weeks ago, he found occasion to discipline one of his pupils, and thereupon received an abrupt call from the father, Mr. L. Josslyn, who was quite insulting to the teacher at the time, and subsequently requested the committee to investigate his character, alleging that his numerous acts of abuse disqualified him for the office. The result of this investigation, not tending to impair the confidence of the committee in Mr. K. as a faithful and efficient instructor, the aforesaid parent, who is the editor of "The Bay State," a partisan newspaper, continued to insert in his paper articles of the most abusive and annoying nature in reference to Mr. K. and his friends. But failing to accomplish his object, and drive the teacher from his post in this way, he circulated a petition, and obtained signers, for Mr. K's. removal. This petition was sent to the committee, who, after six or seven prolonged sessions, devoted to an investigation, decided against Mr. K's. removal, — one only, out of fifteen, voting otherwise. It was at the close of this long-continued investigation that the following excellent and judicious remarks were made by the Rev. Parsons Cooke, D. D., a member of the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN : — I congratulate you, and this board, on having reached this terminating point of these investigations. And though our patience has had a severe test, I think our time has not been wholly wasted. For one, I confess that I have received new light. I had no previous acquaintance with Mr. King. I had never spoken with him, till after these matters of complaint had been brought before us. My apprehension of the case then was, that, as it is human to err, it would probably be easy for his opponents, by a scrutiny of all his acts for four years, to find some acts of indiscretion — some acts which might, in a severe judgment, go to his disadvantage. For few of us have attained to a perfection, which can qualify us to pass such an ordeal unscathed. I have expected that it would be made to appear, when we came to this investigation, that he had committed some faults, which would be a source of deep regret to his friends and to himself ; while I did not expect that there would any thing appear which would justify our taking the severe measure contemplated by his opponents.

But, sir, I must say, that I have been happily disappointed. Our

friend, I presume, has his faults ; but they have not been made to appear on this occasion. No little labor, zeal, and skill, have been spent, to make them appear ; and yet they do not appear. After balancing and scrutinizing the testimony given, *pro* and *con*, I am free to say, that no act of his has been fairly proved, which strikes me to deserve the name even of an indiscretion. And the whole effect of the investigation has been, vastly to elevate Mr. King in my esteem, both as a teacher and a man.

Let us glance at the facts in the case. Mr. King has labored in this school over four years. It has been shown, that this school has usually, and from a variety of causes, presented uncommon difficulties to the teacher. These difficulties have, in a great degree, originated from an unusual forwardness, on the part of a portion of the parents, to gratify a morbid sympathy with truant and ungoverned children, by interfering against the wholesome discipline of the school. Be that, however, as it may ; it has been made clear that such is the fact, and that these instances which have come before us, of over-sensitive parents, complaining that their children have been punished too severely, are in melancholy keeping with the earlier history of the ward. This state of things made Mr. King's place no sinecure. But it has been shown that Mr. King, after he came here, soon surmounted the difficulties of his position, and, with an amount of punishment decidedly less than his assistants and the committee who hired him and had the first supervision of his school thought to be needful, he soon gained the control of the school, and, till this late storm appeared, he has maintained a successful course. And though doubtless no little pains have been taken to cite every case of noticeable punishment, the instances have been very few, considering the length of time — very few, notwithstanding the special difficulties of his position — very few, considering that, in almost every instance when he did punish with any thing like severity, the parents interposed their complaints, thus encouraging the children in their disaffection to the discipline of the school. For four long years, this teacher has toiled on, meeting the difficulties which every day occurred — brought in contact with children of every variety of disposition ; and yet, all of that time, has enabled his opponents to make only that show of instances of severity that they have made. And this I regard as a special wonder.

Gentlemen of the committee, many of you have had experience, as I myself have had, in this honorable yet thankless business of teaching. You know its trials, and its multitude of perplexing cases. And I am sure that, from your own experience, you will regard it as a wonder, that so little appearance of undue severity in this case could be produced. The teacher of a public school that maintains a healthy discipline, and gives universal satisfaction, so that neither child nor mother moves a tongue in complaint, is a prodigy that wants a name. If our best-regulated schools have for the last four years had an average of less punishments, I am much in error.

Look at the case a little more minutely. Look at the evidence touching the teacher's habits of self-control. Except in one instance of hearsay, specially sent for to Lawrence by way of Danvers, and to which, in the circumstances, not the slightest credit is to be given, it

appears, by the universal concurrence of witnesses, that Mr. King is at the farthest remove from passionate. Yea, on this point we need no witnesses. We have seen him with our own eyes, day after day, under the most provoking assaults upon his character here made. And we have seen him calm as a summer's morning. Not a passionate word has he uttered; not even an involuntary sign of irritation has he given. A total stranger, coming in here, and carefully watching his countenance, while traduced, arraigned as a culprit, and worried by provoking questions, might, from the very countenance of the man, read in him high and noble qualifications for a teacher. "He that ruleth his spirit, is better than he that taketh a city." It appears that he has acted as one who regards the necessity of punishing a child, as a grave occasion; that he has not allowed himself to punish, except on the coolest calculation; that he has a rule of calling a witness, who may testify as to the extent of the punishment. Such a one is not apt to punish with undue severity. Most excessive punishments come of passion. One who controls his passions is more to be trusted in the sacred interests of the education of your children, than one who has the most transcendental theory of moral suasion, without self-control.

The testimony thus concurs to show, that Mr. King's administration has been marked with the utmost self-control, and that he has sustained good order, with a very small amount of punishment. What cases of complaint, as to his acts of punishment, had occurred previous to the present municipal year, had come under the notice of previous committees, and been treated according to their merits, to the full justification of the teacher. At the close of the last municipal year, at the annual meeting of the ward, it so happened, providentially, that the ward, in its organic capacity, in a meeting unusually full, voted a unanimous approval of the administration of Mr. King. Here is our assurance, of what indeed we gather from other sources, that, up to that time, his labors had been well received by the great body of the people; that, except in individual instances of over-sensitive parents, such as are constantly occurring under the best teachers, there had been no complaint.

This state of facts enables us to trace existing difficulties to a single event of recent date. The gentleman who first petitioned for Mr. King's removal, it seems, had sent his son to school under instructions to resist the teacher in certain cases; that is, to refuse to answer, when required to give testimony respecting another. A case of discipline occurred. The boy was required to answer a question, and he refused. The command was repeated, and he decidedly refused. The teacher took him by his arms, to carry him from the seat to the platform. The boy made resistance; and while the teacher was bringing him to the platform, the boy uttered threats, and said: "My father will prosecute you; my father will not have me punished." The question now was, whether the teacher, or the boy, should yield. For the teacher to have yielded then, would have been a virtual surrender of the control of the school. He applied the rod till the boy surrendered; and fortunately, he reached that result, without what, in my view, could, in any proper estimate of the circumstances, be called an undue sever-

ity. The boy's submission was gained without lasting wounds or visible bruises.

At this point, to the great injury of the child, and of the peace of the community, the father interfered. With threatening words, gestures, and weapons, he entered the schoolroom, and approaching the teacher said: "You have been beating my boy, and I'll give it to you." "I'll pound you into inch pieces." "I'll beat you to jelly." "I'll make the ward too hot for you." "I'll turn you out of this school." "You and I can't live in peace in the same ward." "You have beat and banged my boy, the day after election, because the vote went against you."

Here may be found the real commencement of the strife, and the commencement of the real causes why the committee have been moved to dismiss the teacher. It plainly appears, in its first beginnings, to have been a matter of personal revenge. And there was a fitness and propriety in that gentleman's coming forward alone, in the first instance, as the sole petitioner. It was most purely his own cause. He doubtless had friends sympathizing with him, but few who, previous to this, had any purpose to ask for Mr. King's dismissal. But we find here, not only the beginning of the reasons of Mr. King's dismissal, so far as those reasons consist of alleged misdemeanors of his, but here is the end of them. Nothing of the kind is alleged to have taken place since that occurrence. So that really all the reasons, in view of which we are to act, are reducible to this narrow space.

The question is, shall Mr. King be dismissed, because, when he punished that boy, he committed an offence that properly works a forfeiture of his place and standing as a teacher? If there were an error, and an indiscretion, in that act of punishment, and that stood alone, we should be taking high ground, indeed, to dismiss a teacher for a single offence. Do we require absolute perfection in our teachers? Where is the teacher who could meet such a requirement? But, in this transaction, I see no offence. I see not what else the teacher could have done, consistently with the ordinary principles of school discipline. If you rule that there shall be no corporal punishment, or that a teacher shall not use testimony as it is used in civil jurisprudence, of course you find him in fault. But, by the same ruling, you condemn not Mr. King alone, but all our best teachers. And a rule of that kind is not to be applied in the concrete, before it is enacted in the abstract. Suppose it be your private opinion, that no corporal punishment, and no testimony of one pupil against another, should be used; you have no warrant to condemn a teacher for using it, when you allow its use by all other teachers, and when they are sustained in it by a wellnigh universal usage. Those questions, then, have nothing to do with his case, and cannot intervene, till you have first established a rule, and posted it up in every schoolhouse, that there shall be no use of testimony, nor of the rod. And if that be so, I challenge any candid man to find the slightest fault with this act of punishment. The child's resistance to a reasonable order of the teacher, and his resistance with bodily force, and with threats of prosecution, and of his father's vengeance, compelled the teacher to proceed with the rod; and the application of the rod ceased as soon as

the boy submitted, and no visible injury appears to have been done to him. I put the question to each member of this committee, What could you have done less, in a similar case? and can you find it in your conscience to condemn and displace and discredit this teacher, for anything which you can find in this act?

This, by the way, is an act on which you have already passed your judgment; and, by a decided vote, you have refused to censure it. For, whatever may be said about your refusal to hear a report of your sub-committee about matters which you did not judge to be properly under your jurisdiction, it is a fact, that *you have both heard and adjudicated this case before*. This the father of the boy fully admitted, in the commencement of these proceedings. He said, that he had no personal interest in asking us to take the chairman's notes as an impartial record of the case, for, as far as the case of his son was concerned, the committee had already acted in proper form. And yet, with singular consistency, he closed his work of presenting testimony, with a demand that we should effect a resurrection upon the chairman's notes of that case. So far, then, as this single case is concerned, you have, in special indulgence to the accusers, put the accused on trial the second time for the same offence. And now, after the scrutiny of a second trial, this act, which is the hinge of the whole controversy, has a triumphant vindication. It challenges criticism itself, to lay its finger on a single fault in it.

And if nothing in this act condemns the teacher, shall we find the grounds of his condemnation in any of the subsequent proceedings of the parties? Are the committee bound to act on the *proclamation* of the accuser? True, he has declared that he will make the ward too hot for the teacher, and with well-directed industry has he labored at the bellows; but has he shown *us* sufficient reasons to *justify us* in adding fuel to the flame? He has given us an affecting illustration of the power of a single man to move the elements of strife and disorder, but no reason why we should lend ourselves, and the sacred interests committed to us by our fellow-citizens, to him, as the tools of his unworthy purposes. "In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird." That declaration, made in advance, that a popular movement was to be generated, that a public opinion against Mr. King was to be manufactured, with the deliberate purpose of effecting his removal, as a mere matter of personal revenge, should satisfy us, in an instant, as to the nature of the whole transaction. We cannot be so weak as to regard this movement as proceeding from pure love to the cause of education. We cannot reach that exuberance of candor and charity which places the movement on the single grounds named by the petitioners, when the author of the movement in the outset proclaimed another and far less worthy purpose.

It was natural that the author of this movement should have been touched by a remark of mine, made in these proceedings, that while "I respected the petitioners," as in duty bound to my fellow-citizens, "I had no respect for the petition." But for the justice of that remark, after what we have seen and heard, I appeal to you, Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee, to what respect is such an instrument of mischief and injustice entitled? Coming forth, as

it does, after and in pursuance of a declaration of that gentleman, that this ward was to be made too hot, &c., coming as the instrument of that design of personal revenge, yet coming under false pretences of tender and pious regard for the interests of education, what respect does it deserve? What but the deep reprobation of every honest and honorable man?

Mr. Chairman, you fill, in this city, a high and honorable position, by the free choice of your fellow-citizens. Suppose, now, some individuals, as a matter of personal revenge for some supposed offence, should draw up and circulate a petition for your impeachment, on the vague ground that our civil interests require it. Suppose that they carry this petition round to confiding friends, and say, "Our mayor has been guilty of such and such flagrant acts, and you must trust us for it; we will show it in due time." And suppose that advantage be thus taken of that ease with which it is notorious that men sign the petitions of their friends—advantage be taken to multiply names against you; and, having counted their hundreds, suppose the petition be triumphantly unrolled, and a declaration made, that here are the names of so many men, good and true, your own neighbors, who know all about you, all legal voters, and all have seen reasons why you should quit your office at once, without even a hearing of the case, on the mere testimony of the petitioners. What respect could you have for such a petition? Yea, with all *that intense regard for the people for which you are so distinguished*, what respect could you have for such a petition? Would a serpent hissing in your path appear less entitled to your regard? And is it not the solemn duty of this committee, to utter the sentiments which they can but feel towards such an instrument, and the unworthy acts of which it is the visible representative, before it passes from their table?

I have confined the view to the single case of punishing the boy of Mr. Josselyn, as embracing the only act of punishment which properly comes into question before us. The reasons are manifest. The other cases alleged have been either virtually or expressly acted upon by the previous committees, to whom they belonged, and who were nearer the events, and could form a better judgment than we can. More than one of those cases, and those of which the most is made, came under the notice of the prudential committees, who examined them enough to be satisfied that the punishment did not exceed the occasion. Those committees come here, and make that declaration. Now, it seems to me, that our position will be somewhat awkward, in condemning the act of those judges on their own testimony. Who has put us in these seats to sit in judgment on the acts of those judges, having acted in their own jurisdiction? It would seem that we should be constituted a court of impeachment, before we can thus be the judges of the judges; and then, it would be a stretch of propriety, to use them as witnesses and condemn them on their own testimony. Nay, if we, looking at the subject at this distance, were convinced that those committees had plainly erred, in approving the teacher's acts, our relations to them would not admit of an act of implied censure, in such personal matters. For they had proper jurisdiction in the case, and we had not. They had the facts fresh and living before them; we take them through a long-drawn tube of hearsay.

But is there any evidence of error in those committees? I see none. Nor does it appear that those cases of punishment were of sufficient importance to have attracted any general attention of the ward. They evidently had not in their own time the power to move the public passions which has now been given to them by artificial means.

In matters of this kind, as well as in many others, this committee is bound by the acts of previous committees. At least, we are bound to this extent: we are bound to treat a teacher as in good standing, when they have declared him to be so, till we find evidence, *in the proper range of our own duties*, to convince us to the contrary; especially when it is to be presumed that their means of knowledge were better than our own.

And now, what have been these acts of these committees? Three years ago, and after Mr. King had been in his place one year, the committee said, "This school holds a high rank, and is an ornament to the town." Two years ago, the committee uttered their deliberate judgment, in their published annual report, and say, "This school maintains the high position which it had previously maintained." The last year's committee, after specifying several points of excellence, and condemning nothing, say, "The result of the examination was entirely satisfactory." These three committees, it must be remembered, were mostly composed of different persons; and yet they all concur in one judgment. And a decent respect for ourselves, and our office, requires that we shall not treat their judgment as a farce.

But it is not committees alone that have united to give Mr. King this high character as a teacher. The ward itself, the people in their organic capacity, have sat in judgment on his case, and that after all these instances of punishment had occurred. The people, at an unusually large meeting, have, by a deliberate vote, declared their unanimous approval of Mr. King's administration; and not only so, they have passed a vote of thanks to him for it. And now, what decent pretext can we have for going back of all these official and organic acts, to find matters of censure against Mr. King? We have been abused without measure, by tongues and types, for not having done it in our previous action on this subject. But it is a plain case, that we should be clearly censurable if we had done it.

But suppose we consent to glean in that field; from all that appears, our gatherings would be small. Patience has had her perfect work, while we have listened to the recitals of the case of the Mills boy, of the Seger boy, the Bisbee boy, and others. As it regards the first, the contradiction was not only between different witnesses, but between different parts of the story of the same witness. It seems that this boy, by the testimony of his own mother, was "very roguish," and "full of mischief," and yet a "remarkably good boy," of the very "best disposition," and best managed "without any punishment." And yet he has had the misfortune to be punished near to death in more schools than one; yes, and to be sent to school by his own mother when he had nine large bunches on his body, the festering wounds created by previous punishment; yes, and to be sent thus maimed to the same school where he had received those well-nigh mortal wounds; and that when his mother really apprehended danger,

that the master would kill him in another onset. And yet, though this was so near to a case of life and death, strange to say, not one of the prudential committee got a sight of his wounds, though they were not wanting in attention to the case. And though in a previous flogging by another master, he was seriously and permanently lamed in the hip, the mother could not tell which hip it was. The mother testifies that the whole surface of the boy's body was discolored with bruises, from the small of his back downwards; and the physician who was called to see him testified that there was only a single spot discolored, and that of the size of a half dollar. This testimony, however, is a little elongated by another witness, who testifies that the physician said it was of the length of his finger. So much for that case.

The case of the Seger boy claims its place in this consideration, from the fact that the boy, by a constitutional tendency, which inheres in the family, which appears in one of his brothers, and in his own present experience, fainted after receiving a punishment which was proved to be slight. It was the fainting only which gave eclat to this case; and the much severer punishment which he had received at another time, without fainting, would have passed unnoticed but for this. But it is quite too much to condemn a teacher for the boy's fainting, since it appeared there was no severity in the punishment itself.

The Bisbee boy next claims attention. Here Mr. King is blamed, not for the punishment, but for being a silent witness of punishment by the teacher of a primary school. It seems that a habit has prevailed, of one teacher calling another as a witness, in cases where a serious punishment is needed; and Mr. King is called in, to bear witness in this case. The boy, attempting to shield one hand from the ferule, by the intervention of the other, had his knuckles severely bruised, and Mr. King took hold of that other hand, and held it back out of the way. This was the head and front of his offending. He did not advise to the punishment; he did not aid in it; he had no agency about it, except to hold back the boy's hand from receiving bruises, and to caution his teacher not to strike the back of his hand. Yet this is brought in against Mr. King as a grave offence. It does not appear that the teacher exceeded the limits of a wholesome severity in that punishment; but if she did, he is not responsible for it. And it clearly shows the great scarcity of causes of complaint, that one so foreign to the case should be so lugged in. Surely, Mr. King's opponents are grateful for small favors in this way.

And as to these cases generally, it must be borne in mind, that where there was an approach to severity, there had been special aggravations of the offence. When the child resists the teacher by struggling, kicking, pulling out his watch, or throwing pitchers at his head — especially when other scholars come to the rescue — the complaint of severe punishment comes with an ill grace. What else would you have a teacher do in such cases? Would you have the order of the school like an inverted cone, bottom upwards? — the master, no master, yielding to those who tell him to his face, "I did not come here to obey?"

As to the cases where visible marks of the rod have been left, no fault of the teacher has been shown. A smart blow upon the muscu-

lar parts of the body will often leave, for a while, a red spot, when no more pain has been inflicted than should be ; and yet no real injury will follow. And also a child, bringing in his other hand or elbow to fend off the ferule, may have an accidental blow inflicted on the knuckles or elbow, without the least blame of the teacher. So a child, resisting in his seat, may have his shin or his hip struck against the bench, and discolored, without any fault of the teacher. Of this nature appear to be the cases before us.

Thus we have before us the grounds on which we are asked to pass censure on a faithful and successful teacher. Sum up the whole, and you have a mass of the merest trumpery.

And now, Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee, I will not so insult your understandings as to assume it to be possible that you can grant the prayer of the petitioners, on such a basis as they have presented you. You act for public interests, and under public responsibilities. These things are not done in a corner. Our actions, and our reasons why we act, are to be widely known, and scrutinized ; and I rejoice in it. Our judgment is to be rejudged. And we shall need strong reasons to justify us before an enlightened public, in putting down a teacher, who, by the force of his talents and faithfulness, has acquired and so long held so high a standing. But do we find any of these strong reasons here ?

But some will say, Whether Mr. King is right or wrong, he ought to be dismissed, for the good of the ward requires it. Such a sentiment, and especially in this case, deserves to be denounced as monstrous. It conveys a deliberate purpose of injustice to the teacher, and to the greatest part of the parents interested in his labors. It has been made to appear to us, that more than three to one of the parents interested desire the continuance of their teacher. They feel deeply and strongly, as those having a deep interest in the question before you. Irrespective of what justice requires for the teacher, they have in their own interests the rights which naturally inhere in majorities. And by what principle of democracy or common justice will you require the many to surrender to the few ? If they were disposed to concede the point, and make a peace-offering of their valued teacher, you would then have another question to consider, whether you could, in justice to Mr. King, sanction such an act ; whether you could fix a stigma upon his fair fame, and work a disqualification for future employment in his profession, when he has so deserved better things at your hands. For the present circumstances of the case would greatly embarrass your action, on such a principle. Much paper has gone abroad against him, waiting for your signature or indorsement. Advantage has been taken of the fact that his opponents have the control of a newspaper. This organ has been used, without stint or decency, in aspersions both of Mr. King and of the committee. The publications have been all upon one side. Some of them were grossly libellous, and all have been sent abroad to hold up this teacher to public odium. And I honor the teacher's forbearance, and proclaim it to his credit here, that he did not use the advantage which the law gave him against his fierce antagonist. Here is another proof, by the way, of his self-control, which so eminently qualifies him for his post. He has not even made a single appeal

to the public ; while an editor, inflamed against him, has kept his own columns filled with abuse, and brought to his aid a host of petty scribblers in sympathizing papers.

Yea, our town has been disgraced in the character of these publications. And can we give even a seeming sanction to all this ? If we yield to this shameful movement, on the ground of mere expediency, we shall infallibly have the credit of having done it on other grounds. Gloss it over as we may, protest and disclaim as we will, it will be trumpeted, at home and abroad, that we have decided in favor of the petitioners, and passed the seal of our justification to these acts. The authors of this movement have, by the publications which they have sent abroad from Dan to Beersheba, and by their gross misrepresentations of the facts in the case, created a case for us. They have compelled us to act on the principle of naked justice to Mr. King, or to have our action perverted, and represented as a condemnation of him. There is now no choice for us but a justification or condemnation of Mr. King. And you are to look simply at the grounds of the proposed condemnation, and act on the simple question, Are they broad enough and solid enough to bear such a burden ?

But still it will be urged, that the peace of the ward will be promoted by our dismissing this teacher. Is it so ? This much is true, that the peace of the ward has been as well sustained as ever before, during the four years of Mr. King's labors, till now of late. And the permanence of such relations is usually better adapted to peace, than frequent changes. But how do we know that it will tend to peace ? We cannot reach that conclusion, without assuming that the majority are men of peace to such an extent that they will sacrifice their own interests and the character of their favorite teacher for the sake of peace, while the minority will not yield even justice to the persecuted. Such an assumption I will not make ; such an assumption I will not act upon.

Nor is this a question limited to the peace and interests of one ward. If we yield to injustice here, we open a way to injustice otherwheres ; we open a way to an influence which will act disastrously on all our schools. We are asked to do an act which will fix the condemnation of the public authorities on acts of wholesome discipline in the schools. We are required to take the part of truant and disorderly children, against a faithful teacher. When it has come to such a pass, already, that boys will resist their teachers by force, by throwing pitchers at their heads, and with profane oaths, with threats of prosecution, and their parents' vengeance, we are asked to come in and give aid to these elements of disorder. It seems that the unruly boys, in the cases under consideration, resisted the teacher under the false apprehension that they were to have the aid of the committee — that the rumor among them was, that the committee were about to turn him out. Have we come here to fulfil such a prophecy ? If we do this thing, we shall carry disorder into all our schools, and convey an impression that the unruly may always calculate on the sympathies of the committee.

Now I put it to the committee, whether the same means, used by the same men, and with the same industry, would not have brought against any teacher as much appearance of wrong as they have in this case. This is a mode of operation against which no teacher can stand.

Yes, but for the sake of peace, and because there is such a bad state of feeling in the ward, we are asked to give place to this storm. Sir, the claim is exorbitant. To give peace to a ward in which such elements and agents of strife exist, is no trifling work. It has been shown that there has ever been a small number of parents here who were ever ready, on slight occasions, to raise complaints, and embarrass the order of the school. It is not our assertion, but the testimony of aged and most respectable witnesses, that a want of peace has been one of the leading wants of the ward for a long time. And now, to require us to give peace to this ward, is to require what our predecessors could not do. And it is too much to require us to sacrifice the teacher for the sake of peace; especially when the hope of peace, even by such a sacrifice, is so slender. No; rather let us do right, and then we shall be in the surest way to ultimate peace — first pure, and then peaceable.

The authors of this disturbance are the last persons who should claim that we shall make peace by the sacrifice of their victim. Few of them, I trust, will now have a face to say, that there are in the demerits of Mr. King sufficient reasons for his dismissal. I will venture to say that they do not expect us to dismiss him on such grounds, but because some of the petitioners wish it, and because they think that the teacher's usefulness has been destroyed, they think it right that we should grant their request. Sir, it is a principle of law and common sense, that no one shall take advantage of his own wrong. It is not competent for these men, after having manufactured a public opinion for the ruin of the character and usefulness of this teacher, to turn to us and say, "True, we do not justify all that is said and done in this business, but it is a fact that the teacher's power for good is seriously maimed, and we ought for that reason to displace him."

No, Sir, that principle of action I abhor. If these men have seriously obstructed the usefulness of this teacher, be it so; and let the guilt rest upon their own heads. I will not absolve them by a pollution of my own conscience. I will not lend myself to finish the work which they have begun, and to fix an official seal to the condemnation of a good teacher. Nay, if I knew that the present interests of the school would suffer by retaining the master — a thing which I believe to be far from fact — yet I should feel bound to retain him till I was convinced that he had deserved dismissal. For in that case a present injury to the school would tend to the general good; whereas, if you act on the contrary principle, and give way to the force of every faction that can disturb a school, and say that a master must go as soon as a faction has impaired his influence, you offer a premium for factions, and license the elements of disorder to do their worst.

No, sir, if this faction have impaired the influence of this teacher, for the sake of justice and the common good of the schools, let him stay, and let the sin be upon their own heads. We shall be clear in the matter, and his labors unfruitful here will be compensated in solid benefits elsewhere accruing. I have always found that the best way to meet such elements of disorder is to face them squarely, and to give place to them — no, not for an hour. If you value the interests of

education, of which you are the constituted guardians — if you seek the good of the rising generation here, and of your children's children, let simple justice be the pole star of your course.

EDUCATION PRACTICAL.

THERE is a tendency widely prevalent, and we fear rapidly increasing, to exchange *prematurely* the quiet discipline and intellectual culture of our schools for the active employments of business, or the pernicious indulgence of youthful leisure. This tendency is sadly felt by the teachers of our higher schools, whose pupils are thus withdrawn at the very period when previous training and increasing mental strength and development, would contribute, in the highest degree, to the pleasure and success of more mature and protracted study. It is seen in the multitudes of unemployed youth who are to be met at the various resorts of excitement or indolence, — in the almost entire disappearance of a former class of pupils of pleasant memory, once denominated “the *great boys and girls*,” and in the almost childish visages of many who have assumed the occupations and garb of maturity. It may also be discerned in the very small proportion of the young of either sex, in our cities and villages most favored with the means of education, who ever enter the schools of the highest grade, or even entertain the wish of availing themselves of the privileges thus afforded them; whilst, of those who commence the higher course, large numbers, a majority perhaps, continue but for a brief period, — willing, indeed, to pursue the prescribed course while no other employment may be had; but eagerly awaiting any opening which may admit them to its privations, its temptations, or its toils. The wonders of science, and the beauty of wisdom, are in vain unfolded to eyes which cannot see. Appeals in behalf of the higher claims of the intellect and the rich rewards of a well-stored and cultivated mind fall upon marble ears. The thoughts, the hopes, and the *erring judgment*, are all engaged in other directions, and to these inducements the heart is adamant.

This tendency we do not hesitate to pronounce a *serious evil*, and one which claims the earnest attention of teachers and the friends of education. We do not question the necessity, which in some cases compels, nor the expediency, which, in some others, invites, to this premature abandonment of the privileges which an enlightened and generous community so freely extends to all. But, abating all cases of necessity and unquestioned expediency, there will still remain by far the larger portion who forego their choicest temporal good for no sufficient

cause, and dispose of their birthright for less than a supply of a present and transient necessity. We do not overlook the fact that many hail the very thing we deplore, as one of the fruits and proofs of the excellence of our school system, on the plea that the facilities for acquiring knowledge are so much increased, that a *sufficiency* of learning may now be gained in a much shorter period than formerly; nor do we intend to waste words upon the false and narrow basis upon which the plea is founded. For, if "wisdom is better than riches," — if "the merchandise of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold," and yet the choicest viands of the feast of knowledge are all untasted by multitudes who are bidden to it, — if thus the crown is withheld from the head of that system to which it most justly belongs, or at the least is deprived of many of its jewels, — if, in fine, the generous and protracted efforts of the wise and good to inspire a *love* of knowledge, and provide the means of attaining it, are to result in any thing higher than hastening the day of entrance into the warehouse or the workshop, or in any thing worthier than thwarting the munificent designs of that Providence, which has assigned so long a duration to the period of youth, as if for the very purpose of guarding its mental and moral development; — then we cannot err in opposing that spirit, which assigns to the various occupations of life what it deems a *competency* of knowledge, and hastens to close the door to all which lies beyond. That spirit which not only errs in assigning the highest value to the lowest quantity, and thereby exalting what should be the *means* to the position of an end, but with equal blindness overlooks the surest method of securing even the fancied end itself.

The *causes* which are usually assigned for the evil in question, we do not wish to discuss. They are various, and all more or less efficient; and all, moreover, frequently and fully exhibited. But there is one so general and efficient, and either embracing or supporting so many others, as to merit a special consideration, and that is, erroneous or defective views of the *true nature of the Practical*, and consequently of the *Practical Nature of Education*.

Few indeed, at the present day, lightly esteem education *as such*: all acknowledge and eulogize its worth. But most persons are devoted to a *practical* life, and whilst they would covet a practical education, they do not esteem education *in the abstract*, as practical. Here may the earnest and enlightened teacher take his stand, and do good service to the cause in which he is enlisted. Let him listen with favor to the usual request of parental solicitude, that *practical* studies should alone be taught. Let him have the wisdom to direct the current which he cannot oppose and instead of attempting to

allay the passion for practical pursuits, let him be foremost in demanding them. But, in answer to the question, "Who will show us any good," *what is practical?* let *his* voice be heard, clear and firm, asserting and maintaining an unqualified "Eureka." Nay, more. Let him not be satisfied with convincing the understanding; but follow up his conquest by appeals to the conscience; and *because* knowledge, in its widest sense, shall have been *proved* to be practical, let its acquisition, to the fullest possible extent, be urged as a *duty*. If, in this general method, no success shall be achieved, little but adventitious improvement may be expected from any other.

The diffident and desponding, to whom the fruits of knowledge seem inviting, but "too high" for *them* to attain to, will be aided by sympathy, and may yield to words of counsel. And happy he, who, drawing from the archives of the past, and the bright examples of living men, the innumerable incentives to persevering industry and self-denial, may incite them forward in the pathway of the scholar, to the *scholar's reward*. A more thankless task will await him, who, by his own personal influence and efforts, shall hope to make any considerable advance against that eagerness for material pursuits, and impatience of mental discipline, which characterize the larger portion of the young, and that apathy towards any decided efforts in study, beyond those essential to the mere purposes of business, so universally prevalent. But let the judgment be set right, and motives to intellectual exertion be drawn from the *right source*, and much will be secured, and secured permanently. Now we know of no surer method of attaining these results than the frequent and earnest illustration of the proposition already stated; that, in whatever manner or degree any of the ordinary employments of life are practical, education is eminently so. Are patience, self-control, and a close and exclusive attention to one's own affairs, practical? Where shall they be more successfully acquired than in the exercises of a well-regulated schoolroom? Are quickness of perception, the power of communicating knowledge, correctness of judgment, and refinement of taste deemed practical acquisitions, let it be shown, as with a sun-beam, how the various studies of an extended course, in a hundred ways, contribute to their growth. Is providing for the nourishment of the body, and the increase of goods, the "one thing" practical? Educated industry will not fail of the preëminence here. Is the improvement of mankind, the doing good to our fellow-men, an object of paramount desire? Lay aside that musty volume; Greek and Latin will do for the recluse; we wish for something practical. Thus may one have addressed the poor monk of Erfurth, as he toiled in the solitude of the cloister. But Reformation lay hid in the knowl-

edge he was acquiring, and the Protestant world is to-day the *practical* result of Luther's study of the classics. And so might every step in the world's progress be a triumphant rebuke of a similar demand to banish abstract study.

But surely *railroads* are *practical*. Yes, but *why*? Because they furnish facilities for travelling. But of what use is that? Surely, to create and extend business. But of what use is *that*? To increase the comforts of life; to enable men to build and furnish houses; in a word, to create wealth; and wealth may insure leisure, and freedom from toil. But, once more, of what use are these? of what *practical* value, *what*, unless to enable their possessor to devote to purposes of *intellectual and moral* cultivation, the time and powers which must otherwise be devoted to his physical wants? For none will claim as a practical desideratum that vulgar leisure which, without refinement, displays its vanity or grossness, and which, without the previous toil, is as much the possession of the peacock or the swine, as of any of our favored race. Here, then, we find business, in its most material forms, culminating in education. He then, who *directly* and in early life, secures that, which years of toil and material changes are alone subsidiary to, is the *practical* man, and the practical is that which most immediately ministers to the highest aspirations of our nature. The stately monument is practical; for it calls up the memories of the past, inspires hope in the future, and strengthens the love of country. Much more does the study of history do the same. But our object is statement, not illustration. The human soul was not designed to be materialized in its passage through this world. It will at length return to God who gave it; and *he* will be found to have been the most practical, for all the high purposes of his being, whose spirit shall return at last, not a "withered and a sapless thing," but full grown and vigorous, expanded in its powers, to honor "Him who gave it." And here is the moral element of most direct and powerful influence over the young, in promoting their education. Let it be clearly seen that *truth*, all truth, is the appointed nutriment of the mind; and that, to the *extent* of one's privileges, he is *accountable* for its improvement. In a word, let it be well understood and *felt*, that for one's own happiness, or that of the world, a well-educated mind is more practical than any physical attainment, and that the duty of devotion to study rests on something more authoritative than choice or interest, and we may reasonably expect the evil of which we complain, not, indeed, to be done away, but to be diminished, and education may be more generally welcomed as the truest expediency, and as a mandate of highest duty.

R.

HOME PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL.

It is an old saying, which has lost none of its truth by age, that "*Knowledge is power.*" Power wisely directed is a positive good — a desirable acquisition. Whatever tends to promote mental cultivation, by which the mind is enabled to gain knowledge, especially if its influence upon *moral* culture is also good, deserves the consideration of those who are laboring to promote the interests of education.

"Home preparation for school" embraces a great variety of topics. We shall, however, confine our remarks to that part of "home preparation" which consists in learning at home, every day, one or more lessons to be recited at school; and to the duty of teachers to assign such lessons to their pupils, and of parents to interest themselves so much in these home lessons, as to allow their children ample time to learn them. If we shall succeed in demonstrating the value of such home preparation to the pupil, to the family of which he is a member, to the school, and to society, we shall not need to urge upon teachers and parents the duty alluded to; for those who sustain so important relations belong, or should belong, to the class of wise men and women to whom "a word is sufficient."

1. *The advantages of such home preparation to the pupil himself.* A good education, the proper cultivation of the intellectual powers, consists not so much in the *amount of knowledge acquired*, as in the *ability to acquire knowledge*; not so much in the ability to receive instruction from the lips of another, as in the ability to investigate truth for one's self; not in having difficulties made easy and taken clean out of the way, but in removing them by one's own effort. Such being the design of learning lessons, it is obvious that lessons learned at home are ordinarily much more valuable than lessons learned at school.

How are lessons commonly learned at school?

The pupil sits down to his task which is to be recited at a given time. He meets with a difficulty — a little time is spent upon it, and if he cannot pretty readily solve it, he applies to his teacher for help, or obtains permission to speak to another in whose power he has more confidence than in his own. He would often study longer by himself, but time passes, and if he waits, the lesson will not be ready in season for recitation. Or, it may be, he passes over with little study the more difficult parts of the lesson, learning only the easier, and depending upon help from the teacher at time of recitation, which is near at hand. Even if the lesson is well learned, the pupil passes directly from the book to the recitation.

Contrast this with the manner of learning the lesson at home. It is conned over in the evening ; if difficulties occur, they become the subject of careful and deliberate thought. Again and again does he return to his task ; it is among the last thoughts before he sleeps, and among the first when he wakes. And he soon learns by experience that difficulties which careful and patient study seem not to remove in the evening, do, frequently, after such evening study, vanish with the night ; what was dark, or dimly seen the previous evening, is now bright as the rising sun. Such an exercise begets strength ; — strength of intellect ; strength of purpose ; confidence in one's own powers ; and an independence of the aid of others, which he seldom feels whose study hours are confined to the schoolroom. Is not the pupil's education very much more advanced by such home study than by lessons ordinarily learned at school ?

Let us suppose a school term to consist of twelve weeks, and that one such lesson is learned per day, making seventy-two lessons in the term. What a stride has the pupil taken in his education, which he has not begun to take whose studies have been confined to the schoolroom. Not only has he learned these seventy-two lessons, but his mind has been more cultivated by the exercise than it would be by learning twice seventy-two lessons in the schoolroom. Nor is this all. His progress in study in school to-day, is all the easier and the more rapid and pleasant, in consequence of the exercise of the last evening. Moreover, each successive evening lesson becomes easier as the mind acquires strength by such deliberate and patient study. Longer tasks are cheerfully undertaken and learned. It is not unlike a daily deposit of small savings in a bank, that allows daily compound interest for the sums deposited. Such daily deposits for three, six, or nine months in the year, for a period of ten years, will swell to a large amount by the time the youth is twenty-one years of age ; a capital which almost every young man ought to possess, and which will yield a revenue that will both bless its possessor, and render him a far greater blessing to society than he could be without it.

Were this a capital of Federal money, and should we show how much a daily deposit of five cents for six months of each year, for the ten years from six to sixteen, would amount to at the age of twenty-one, its value to a young man just entering upon life would be justly appreciated. But what is a capital of dollars compared with the capital acquired by time spent in cultivating one's intellectual and moral nature ; with that power which superior education gives a man or woman at any period of life ?

But this advantage resulting from such home preparation is of little value compared with another to be mentioned. We all

frequently say to our pupils that their education is but *begun* at school ; that all that can be done there is to lay the *foundation* for an education ; the erecting of a superstructure must be the work of a life. We would teach them that the education acquired while at school is by no means complete. If they would be highly useful, they must continue, at home, the studies which have been commenced at school. They must choose for their literary companions, not the novelist, and the miserable scribblers of the light literature of the day, which are taken as the only companions of so many of our youth on leaving the school-room ; but they must select the works of men and women who have thought much, whose minds have been disciplined by study ; whose writings can be appreciated only by minds disciplined by study ; which indeed will be read by few whose minds have not been accustomed to study.

But will the youth who have been taught by long years of training that schoolbooks, books that require study, are for the schoolroom only, — whose fireside associates and home companions have been confined to the light literature just referred to, — will such a youth, after leaving school, undertake a course of reading which will require vigorous, independent, manly thought, and hard labor ? It should never be forgotten by the teacher or the parent, that “ man is a bundle of habits ; ” that the *habits* he forms during his school-days, are more important than any amount of *knowledge* he may there acquire.

Let then the youth early learn to study his book at home ; and, during his whole pupilage, let him not, for a single day, be excused from the labor of preparing some exercise at the fire-side. We may then hope that when he leaves school, he will not utterly forsake his studies ; that, in his future intercourse with books, he will not be confined to those of a light and frivolous character ; but that from *choice*, as well as from a sense of duty, he will cultivate the acquaintance of authors, whose works are adapted to perfect the mental and moral training already so happily commenced.

The healthful *moral* influence of such evening exercises deserves a passing notice. The mind of youth is ever active. If not employed upon one thing it will be upon some other. If suitable employment be not provided for it, it will almost certainly seek employments which are unsuitable and degrading. How are our youth exposed to temptation, in consequence of having nothing at home to occupy and interest them ! What, therefore, we can do to furnish them with such occupation, especially, whatever we do to form in them habits of home-study, and a love for substantial literature, is so much done to save them from the snare of him who

“ finds some mischief still,
For idle hands to do.”

How many a victim to vicious habits might have been saved to his family and friends, and to society, if suitable employment had, in his youthful days, been provided for him by his parents and teachers.

Again : The influence of such home preparation for school upon *the family*.

Not only is the *individual* benefited by such a course, but other members of the family partake with him in its benefits. Parents are usually interested in what interests their children ; and if the son or daughter spends an hour or two daily at home in preparing some school exercise, the father and mother, and not unfrequently the brothers and sisters, become interested in the school and its exercises, as they otherwise would not do. The lesson will sometimes suggest topics for conversation and inquiry ; questions will often be raised which cannot be settled without some research. Other authors will be consulted if they can be obtained. Older members are invited to hear the lesson recited, and are led in this way, to review the studies of their earlier years ; the younger are encouraged to persevere in their studies, and thus, by such secret and unseen influences, the whole family is affected. A love for books of standard excellence is begotten, and home influence becomes something superior to the fireside gossip which characterizes so many family circles.

And while the school is thus made to act upon the family, the family reacts favorably upon the school ; the whole district is benefited ; and, as the community is made up of families and school districts, society at large is benefited. We do not say that this is the only means of benefiting society, but we do say it is *a* means of doing extensive good, which no teacher should omit to use.

Is it asked how early *such* home preparation should be commenced ? We answer as soon as the child begins to go to school. To the Abecedarian's apron we would daily, at least, pin a letter, either from the printed book, or from nature's alphabet, though it were but the letter A, or an oak leaf, that he might tell the folks at home its name, and be led to search for other A's and oak leaves, in other books, or by the wayside, to show to his mother and schoolmistress.

Yes, from the tenderest to the most mature age, I would bring the schoolroom and the fireside as close together as possible ; and make each, as it ever should be, an auxiliary of the other. Our free schools are, under God, the hope of the country. On them, more than upon any other instrumentality, depend the prosperity and perpetuity of our free institutions. But not till parents and teachers unite their efforts more than they have been wont to do, will either our schools or our families become

what they ought to be, and what they might become, if parents and teachers were more careful to co-operate with each other, in their efforts for the welfare of those committed to their charge.

"ALGEBRAIC PARADOX."

- "1. Let $a = x$, then,
2. multiplying by x , $ax = x^2$,
3. adding $-a^2$, $ax - a^2 = x^2 - a^2$,
4. resolving into factors, $a(x - a) = (x + a)(x - a)$,
5. dividing by $x - a$, $a = x + a$,
6. substituting a for x , $a = a + a = 2a$, and
7. dividing by a , $1 = 2$."

In the January number of the Teacher, the above paradox occurs, with this query: "Where is the fallacy?"

I have hoped some one would answer the question; but, being disappointed in this, I will, without claiming any originality, suggest that there is fallacy in passing from the fourth to the fifth equation.

The division there required being *indicated*, gives us $\frac{a(x-a)}{x-a} =$ $\frac{(x+a)(x-a)}{x-a}$, an equation in which the numerator and the denominator of each member is equal to 0, that is, the equation may be reduced to the form, $\frac{0}{0} = \frac{0}{0}$. But Professor Chase, on the one hundredth page of his Algebra, says: "In regard to the result $\frac{0}{0}$, it is obvious that any finite quantity whatever, multiplied by the divisor 0, will produce the dividend 0, and is therefore a proper value of the expression. This expression may therefore represent *any quantity whatever*."

Professor Whitlock, on the one hundred and twenty-fourth page of his Geometry, says of the symbol $\frac{0}{0}$, "This, in itself, abstractly considered, has no meaning at all, for to it we cannot attach any idea independent of its origin."

Professor Davies, in his translation of Bourdon, pages 102-104, gives various examples showing that $\frac{0}{0}$, may express *a determinate, an infinite, or an indeterminate quantity*. It is sufficient for my present purpose to copy a single example giving *a determinate value*.

Suppose $x = \frac{a^3 - b^3}{a^2 - b^2}$, in which let $a = b$, then, by resolving, we have $x = \frac{a^3 - b}{a^2 - b^2} = \frac{(a-b)(a^2 + ab + b^2)}{(a-b)(a+b)}$, or by suppressing the common factor and substituting a for b , we have $x = \frac{a^2 + a^2 + a^2}{a+a} = \frac{3a^2}{2a} = \frac{3a}{2}$, a determinate and definite quantity.

If we take the first member of the equation in question, $\frac{a(x-a)}{x-a}$, ($= \frac{0}{0}$), and reduce it, we find its determinate value is a ; in the same manner we find the value of the second member, $\frac{(x-a)(x+a)}{x-a}$, ($= \frac{0}{0}$), to be $x + a$, or $2a$, since $x = a$.

Now although there is no impropriety in the equation, $a(x-a) = (x+a)(x-a)$, that is, $0=0$, yet there is an absurdity in saying that the determinate values of the two fractions, $\frac{a(x-a)}{x-a}$ and $\frac{(x+a)(x-a)}{x-a}$, are equal, for each of those determinate values depends upon the forms of these fractions respectively.

Sherwin, Perkins, and others, discuss the signification of this symbol, $\frac{0}{0}$, which, in its relations to the higher mathematics, is very important and quite intricate.

Feeling that my remarks may be erroneous or deficient, I shall be content if my effort shall call forth, from any source, a more correct, more full and lucid solution of this question, which has so long troubled many teachers and pupils.

In view of the apparently correct process by which we arrive at the absurd conclusion that $1=2$, many have been ready to declare that implicit reliance could not be placed in mathematical calculations, but nothing is farther from the truth. In no science is the beautiful consistency and harmony of truth more admirably exhibited than in the multifarious, the wonderful, and always perfectly accurate results of mathematical analyses, when a right interpretation is given to the conditions of problems and to each successive step in their solution. J. S. E.

HEALTH.—We had designed to write a short homily on this topic. But the editor of the August number, in his own effective manner, has done the thing so happily, that we can only recommend to every one who has not read it, to do so; and to those who *have* read it, to read it again,—and to all, to put in practice the recommendations of the writer.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

Six Teachers' Institutes have been arranged for the present autumn. Each is to continue for one week only. The first will be held at Lenox, commencing September 30; the second at Fitchburg, commencing October 7; the third at Milford, commencing October 21; the fourth at Hadley, commencing October 28; the fifth at Falmouth, commencing November 11; the sixth at Monson, commencing November 18. Each Institute will be opened on Monday, at 10 o'clock, A. M., and will be closed on Saturday, at noon. Every teacher, who intends to become a member, should be present at the opening.